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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
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SPECIAL COMMODITIES BRANCH MEMORANDUM NO. A-2

To: All Divisions and Sections, Special Commodities Branch

From: H. C. Albin, Chief, Special Commodities Branch

Subject: Functions of the Special Commodities Branch

PART I - THE COMMODITY DIVISIONS

The Special Commodities Branch is responsible for the management of over 100 different commodities, including coffee, tea, spices, cocoa, confectionery, essential oils, vitamins, yeast, fish and peanuts for edible use, many of which are vital to the war effort.

The commodities managed by the Special Commodities Branch are assigned to the three commodity divisions: Coffee, Tea and Special Foods Division; Chemicals and Special Products Division; and Fish and Fish Products Division. With respect to its assigned commodities, each commodity division carries out similar functions.

Those functions are set forth in Director's Memorandum No. 2, Supplements 31 and 34. Inasmuch as the Special Commodities Branch memorandum series covers only the functions for which a Branch procedure has been established, there is given below a brief resume of each major responsibility, together with references to the authorities and procedures used as a basis of operations.

- A. Food Order Administration (Director's Memorandum No. 42 and Supplements; Director's Memorandum No. 2, Supplement 31; Special Commodities Branch Memorandum No. M-1)

The War Food Orders administered by the Branch are issued to achieve the following objectives: (1) to set aside for government use all or part of the commodity that is necessary to the war food supply programs, (2) to conserve and provide for an equitable distribution of commodities in short supply among civilian and war food programs, and (3) to allocate commodities for a particular use or to particular persons.

The administration of an order involves the passing upon petitions and appeals, determining compliance with the order through checking of reports submitted by industry, referring violations to the Compliance Branch, and recommending disposition of such cases.

B. Importation of Foods - (Director's Memorandum No. 15, Supplement 4)

The national supply of coffee, tea, spices and cocoa beans and other products assigned to this Branch is entirely dependent on importation, which is in turn dependent upon the supplies that are available in other parts of the world and the amount of shipping space that can be allotted. It is the responsibility of the Branch, on the basis of national and international allocations, to recommend and justify the importation of these foods in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of civilian and war food programs. After a shipping quota has been established our primary objective is to assure an equitable distribution of the commodity to qualified handlers in the industry. The Branch may also recommend directives under which the Foreign Economic Administration may make public purchases in foreign countries of the commodities handled by the Branch.

C. Production Programs - (Special Commodities Branch Memorandum No. M-6, "Priority Applications", SCB Memorandum No. M-3, and Industry Operations Branch Memorandum No. 1, "Industry Advisory Committees")

The Branch operates an over-all production program which has as its objectives (1) providing the food processing industry with adequate manpower and sufficient supplies of critical and controlled materials, and (2) formulating and presenting to the industry ways and means of bringing about improvements in processing and distribution. These objectives involve study of production methods, plant conditions, manpower, raw materials, equipment needs, etc., and development of new commodities that can be used as substitutes for commodities in short supply.

In addition, the Branch appoints Industry Advisory Committees with representatives of the Branch acting as chairmen. These committees meet in Washington for the purpose of advising the Branch on the management with respect to the industry's problems, particularly as they relate to needs during the war emergency. Generally, proposed War Food Orders are discussed, and all other food management problems, such as transportation, WPB Orders, raw materials, etc., are presented to these committees for advice.

D. Allocation - (Req. & Alloc. Control, "Consolidation of Memoranda on Procedure for National and International Allocation of Food", Special Commodities Branch Memorandum No. M-5)

This Branch is charged with the responsibility for determining the inventory, production and import potentialities of each commodity. With this information and knowledge of

the requirements, the Branch recommends the national and international allocations of commodities in short supply, in order to assure equitable division of the available supplies among the United Nations and the various claimants in the United States.

E. Price and Rationing - (Director's Memorandum No. 2, Supp. 34)

In order to bring about an equitable distribution of food supplies and to stabilize the national economy, the Branch recommends to OPA through proper channels the need for rationing or lifting of a ration order on a commodity. Prices are studied to determine whether a price ceiling should be placed on commodities, or whether price ceilings should be changed.

F. Price Support and Diversion - (Director's Memorandum No. 23,
Director's Memo. No. 2, Supp. 34)

Price support and diversion programs are initiated whenever it is necessary to encourage the production of certain agricultural products and to channel them into the processed products that are most needed.

G. Purchase Programs - (Director's Memorandum No. 2, Supp. 31)

The Branch participates with the Procurement Branch in the development of purchase programs to synchronize production and allocation with Lend-Lease and other government purchase needs. Purchase specifications are reviewed at the request of the Procurement Branch.

PART II - THE OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND SERVICES DIVISION

The commodity divisions are serviced by an Operational Planning and Services Division. Each organizational unit of the Division has a definite field of responsibility, such as "technical services", "authorities and procedures", etc., and carries out specific functions in connection therewith.

- A. The Office of the Chief directs the activities of the division; conducts special assignments at the request of the Chief of the Branch; handles all compliance matters for the Branch, including review and action on investigative reports; correlates Branch activities in relation to the Petition Review Committee; advises the Director's office of contemplated food orders; handles all food order educational programs for the Branch; and maintains liaison with the Industry Operations Branch with respect to formation of Industry Advisory Committees and "A" Awards.
- B. The Authorities and Procedures Section conducts general studies of operating procedures in the Branch and recommends new and revised procedures; assists the divisions

in drafting Branch communications and forms; analyzes directives, orders, legislation, etc., for the purpose of defining and interpreting underlying authorities of Branch operations; and coordinates certain functions which require action by several or all of the various units of the Branch.

- C. The Technical Services Section works with the commodity divisions and with various industries in the development of new and substitute products and production processes; gives technical assistance to the commodity divisions in research and analysis; reviews economic and program recommendations of the commodity divisions, and performs special research and analysis at the request of the Branch Chief and the commodity divisions. This Section also serves as a central point in the Branch for presenting to OMF the requirements of industry for critical materials.
- D. The Analysis and Reports Section prepares and issues all Branch reports that require information from more than one division, including summaries of petitions and appeals, price reports, etc.; represents the Branch on all matters pertaining to price and rationing regulations; and maintains liaison with the Procurement Branch, Program Liaison; Civilian Food Requirements Branch; Requirements and Allocations Control, and others.
- E. The Administrative Services Section prepares budget estimates and maintains budgetary accounts; procures and places personnel; prepares travel authorizations and approves travel vouchers; procures and controls office space, equipment, supplies and materials; and conducts all other administrative services of the Branch.